# A Detection of damnable driftes, practized by three VVitches arraigned at Chelmisforde in Essex, at the laste Assises there holden, whiche were executed in Aprill. 1579.

Set forthe to discouer the Ambushementes of Sathan, whereby he would surprise vs lulled in securitie, and hardened with contempte of Gods vengeance threatened for our offences.

*Imprinted at London for Edward White, at the little North-dore of Paules.*

BRIT.
MUSEUM

# To the Reader.

ACcept this pamphlet (Christian Reader) view, and peruse it with discretion, and hedefulnesse. No trifles are therin conteined worthy to be contẽned, nor pernicious fantazies deseruyng to bee condemned. But contrariwise in this pretie plot may holsome hearbes of admonitions for the vnwarie, and careleſſe, and ſoote flowers to recreate the wearied ſenſes, be gathered. For on thone ſide the cleare ſight maie eſpie the ambuſhmentes, whiche Sathan the ſecrete woorkemaiſter of

wicked driftes, hath placed in moſte partes of this realme, either by craftie conueighaunces, to creepe into the conceiptes of the ſimple, or by apparaunt treacherie to vndermine and ſpoile the ſtates of ſuche as God permitteth him to haue power ouer. And on the other ſide the eye that is wimpled, may hereby be aduertiſed of the darkeneſſe, wherewith his vnderſtandyng is ouercaſt, and puttyng of the veile of vanitie, maie reclaime his concept, and eſteeme of the impietie of the offendours and vilanie of their actes, accordyng to the woorde of God, and waightineſſe of the caſe. And if in tyme paſt he hath eſcaped their Sorceries, let hym not the leſſe

feare

*feare the harmes that maie hereafter ensue. For the Deuill by the sufferaunce of almightie God, is as well able to plague the persone, that moste presumeth of safetie, as any haue bin who in this treatise are mentioned. Some with muche adoe cã be awaked out of their drousie dreames, though thei bee tolde that their neighbours house is on fire. But when their owne walles are inuaded with like flames, thei shall finde that it had bin better to haue come an howre too soone, to quenche those forrein fires, then to haue risen one minute too late to extinguishe the same, creepyng into their owne chambers. If therefore thou be assured that thy neighbour,*

*either in bodie, familie, or gooddes is impaired by damnable Witchcrafte, or perceiueſt by information, or other wiſe ought of ſuche deuiſes, intẽded to be practized, or likely preſumption of ſuche Deuiliſhe deedes contriued, for Charitie to thy Chriſtian brother, and tender regard of thine owne ſtate, preuente or ſtop the miſchief by all poſſible meanes. And for thyne owne parte with praier, and aſſured faithe in the merites of Chriſt Jeſus ſhield thy ſelf, ſo ſhal neither the Deuill nor his Angelles haue power, ouer thee, or thine.*

*Farewell.*

## ¶ The Confession of Elizabeth Fraun-ces, late of Hatfeelde in Essex.

IMprimis, the saied Elizabeth Fraunces cõfessed that about Lent last (as she now remembreth) she came to one Pooles wife her neighbour, and required some olde yest of her, but beyng denied the same, she departed towardes one good wife Osbornes house a neighbour dwelling thereby of whome she had yest, and in her waie going towardes the saied goodwife Osbornes house, shee cursed Pooles wife, and badde a mischief to light vppon her, for that she would giue her no yest, Whereuppon sodenly in the waie she hard a greate noise, and presently there appered vnto her a Spirite of a white colour in seemyng like to a little rugged Dogge, standyng

neere her vppon the grounde, who asked her whether she went? shee answered for suche thinges as she wanted, and she tolde him therewith that she could gette no peese of Pooles wife and therefore willed the same Spirite to goe to her and plague her, whiche the Spirite promised to doe, but first he bad her giue him somewhat, then she hauing in her hand a crust of white bread, did bite a peece thereof and threwe it vppon the grounde, whiche she thinketh he tooke vp and so went his waie, but before he departed from her she willed hym too plague Pooles wife in the head, and since then she neuer sawe him, but she hath harde by her neighbours that the same Pooles wife was greuously pained in her head not longe after, and remayneth very sore payned still, for on saterdaie last past this Examinate talked with her.

2 Item this Elizabeth Fraunces saieth further, that she knoweth one Elizabeth Lorde a widowe, dwellyng in the same parishe of Hatfielde and so hath doen of longe tyme, of whom she hard, that about seuen or eight yeres paste she brought drinke in a crewse, and gaue it to one Thou Fraunces seruaunte to goodman

Some

Some of thesame parishe, shortly after the taking of whiche drinke he sickened, and died.

3 Item she further confesseth that she likewise knoweth that the same Widowe Lorde, was saied to haue bewitched one Jone Robertes, seruaunte to old Higham, in a peece of an Apple cake whiche she gaue her, vpon the eatyng whereof she presently sickened, and not long after died.

4 Item she also confesseth, that she knowes one Mother Osborne, a Widowe in the same toune to be a witche, and that she hath a marke in the ende of one of her fingers like a pitt, and an other marke vppon the outside of her right legge, whiche she thinketh to bee pluckt out by her Spirit: and that one Mother Waterhouse her owne sister (long since executed for Witch crafte) had the self same markes, whiche she termeth (nippes) and she saieth that this Mother Osborne liyng lame, and complainyng of her sore legge, she the saied Elizabeth Fraunces came vnto her, and required to see her leg, whiche beeyng shewed vnto her, she the saied Elizabeth badde to put it into the bedde again, saiyng: that she her self knewe that the same

came, by waute of well seruyng of God. And thus muche for Elizabeth Fraunces.

¶ *The Euidence giuen against Elleine Smithe of Maldon.*

THere was one Jhon Chaundeler dwellyng in Maldon, whose wife named Alice Chaundeler, was mother vnto this Elleine Smithe, and for Witchcrafte was executed long before, after whose execution he went vnto his daughter in lawe Ellein Smithe, and demaunded certaine money of her, whiche she had receiued of her mother his wife, by meanes of whiche money there fell out, and in fallyng out the saied Elleine in greate rage saied vnto hym, that it had been better for hym, he had neuer fallen out with her, and so it came to passe, for the same Jhon Chaundeler confessed before his death, that after the same hower that she had saied so vnto hym, he neuer eate any meate that digested in hym, but euer it came vp againe as soone as it was done, by whiche meanes he consumed, and wasted away to his death.

2 The sonne of the forsaid Ellen Smithe,

of

of the age of thirteene yeres, or there aboutes, came to the house of one Jhon Estwood of Malden, for to begge an almose, who chid the boye awaie from his dooze, wherevppon he wente home and tolde his mother, and within a while after the saide Estwood was taken with very greate paine in his bodie, and the same night followyng, as he satte by the fire with one of his neighbours, to their thinkyng thei did see a Ratte rume vp the Chimney, and presently it did fall doune again in the likenesse of a Tode, and takyng it vp with the tongges, thei thruste it into the fire, and so helde it in forcesibly, it made the fire burne as blewe as Azure, and the fire was almoste out, and at the burnyng thereof the saied Ellen Smithe was in greate paine and out of quiete, wherevppon dissemblyngly she came to the house of the foze saied Jhon Estwood, and asked how all that were there did, and he saied well I thanke God, and she said, I thought you had not been well, and therefoze I came to see how you did, and so went her waie.

3 Also it was auouched, and by this prisoner confessed, that where as her daughter, and the daughter of one Widowe Webbe of Maldon afoze saied, did fall out and fight, the same El-

lein

lein Smithe offended thereat, meetyng good wife Webbes daughter the nexte daie, gaue her a blowe on the face, whereupon so soone as the childe came home she sickened, and languishyng twoo daies, cried continually, awaie with the Witche, awaie with the Witch, and so died. And in the mornyng immediatly after the death of the same childe, the saied good wife Webbe espied (as she thought) a thyng like to a blacke Dogge goe out at her doore, and presently at the sight thereof, she fell distraught of her wittes.

4 Besides the sonne of this Mother Smith, confessed that his mother did keepe three Spirites, whereof the one called by her greate Dicke, was enclosed in a wicker Bottle: The seconde named Little Dicke, was putte into a Leather Bottle: And the third termed Willet, she kepte in a Wolle packe. And therupon the house was commaunded to bee searched. The Bottles and packe were found, but the Spirites were vanished awaie.

¶ *The effecte of the Euidence againste Mother Staunton, late of Wimbishe in Essex, who was arraigned, but not executed, for that no manslaughter, or murder was obiected against her.*

Impri-

IMprimis, this Mother Staun-
ton, late of the parishe of Wim-
bishe in Esser, came to the house
of one Thomas Pyat of Broke
Walden, Thou Farrour of Li-
bleburie beeyng present, and one Thomas
Swallowe, and the saied Mother Staunton,
beyng demaunded by one of them how she did,
she aunswered, that a knaue had beaten her:
saiyng she was a Witche, then saied he again,
in good faithe Mother Staunton, I thinke
you bee no Witche, no Maister qᵖ she, I am
none in deede, although I can tell what belon-
geth to that practise, of whiche woordes, the
goodman of the house tooke witnesse of the a-
forenamed parties, and deliuered a bill subscri-
bed mith their handes thereof, to Maister
George Nicolles.

2 Item, the saied Mother Staunton came
to his house an other tyme, and after certaine
woordes of anger betweene hym and her, he
raced her face with a Nedle, what quoth she,
haue you a Flea there: and the nexte night af-
ter, the saied Patte was so greeuously taken
with tormente of his Limmes, that he neuer
thought to haue liued one hower longer, which
also was subscribed and sent.

Item

3 Item, she came the third tyme by his doze with Graines, and he demaundyng a fewe of her, she asked what he would doe with them, I will giue them, saied he, to my Chickens, and snatchyng a handfull from her, did so. But after thei had tasted of them, three or fower douzen of them died, and onely one Chicken escaped of them all.

4 Item, she came on a tyme to the house of one Richard Saunder of Brokewalden, and beeyng denied Yeest, whiche she required of his wife, she went her waie murmuryng, as offended with her aunswere, and after her departure, her ponge child in the Cradle was taken vehemently sicke, in a merueilous strange maner, whereuppon the mother of the childe tooke it vp in her armes to comforte it, whiche beyng doen, the Cradle rocked of it self, fire or seuen tymes, in presence of one of the Earle of Surreis gentilmen, who seyng it stabbed his dagger three or fower tymes into the Cradle ere it staied: Merily iesting and saiyng, that he would kill the Deuill, if he would bee rocked there.

5 Item, the saied Mother Staunton, came on a tyme to the house of one Robart Petie of

Broke-

Brookewalden, and beyng denied by his wife diuerse thynges, whiche she demaunded at once, and also charged with the stealyng of a Knife from thence, she wente her waie in greate anger, and presently after her departure, the little childe of the saied Pete fell so straungely sickeas for the space of a Weeke, as no bodie thought it would liue.

6 Item, the saied Stauntons wife, came also to one Willyam Tozners house of Brokewalden vpon a Fridaie, as she had doen often in tymes paste, and beeyng denied of certaine thynges whiche she craued, as a peece of Leather &c. she asked the good wife how many childzen she had, who aunswered one, whiche childe beeyng then in perfite healthe, was presently taken with suche a sweate and coldnesse of bodie, and fell into suche shrickyng and staryng, wringyng and writhyng of the bodie to and fro, that all that sawe it, were doubtfull of the life of it.

7 Item, she came on a tyme to the house of Robart Cornell of Suersem, and craued a Bottle of Milke of his wife, but beyng denied it, she departed for a little while, leauyng her owne Bottle behinde her, and tooke an other with her, that belonged to the afore saied Cor-

nel,

nell, after three daies she came againe, and requested her owne Bottle, and restored the other, crauyng Milke as before, the wife of the house alwaies suspectyng her to bee a Witche denied her requeste, and barred the dooꝛes against her, whereupon she satte doune vppon her heeles before the dooꝛe, and made a Circle vppon the grounde with a knife. After that she digged it full of holes with in the compasse, in the sight of the saied wife, her man, and her maide, who demaundyng why she did so? She made aunswere, that she made a shityng house foꝛ her self after that soꝛte, and so departed, the nexte daie the wife commyng out at the same dooꝛe, was taken sicke, and began to swell frō tyme to tyme, as if she had been with child, by whiche swellyng she came so greate in bodie, as she feared she should burste: and to this daie is not restoꝛed to healthe.

8 Item, she came often to the house of one Jhon Hopwood of Walden, and had continually her requestes, at the laste beyng denied of a Leathern thong, she went her waie offended and the same night his Geldyng in the stable, beyng the daie before in very good ease, died sodainly, and afterward beyng burdened with all, she neuer denied it.

Item,

Item, she commyng to the house of Thom Connell the yonger of Wimbilhe, and beeyng denied her demaunde, she tooke offence, and immediatly after his cattell in steede of sweete Milke, yelded goze stinkyng blood, and one of his Kine fell into suche miserable plight, that for a certaine space, he could by no meanes recouer her.

Item, she came on a tyme to the Vicars house at Wimbilhe, and beyng denied her errande by his wife (he beeyng as then from home) his little soune in the Nurses lapp was taken with suche vehemēt sickues, that the beholders supposed no lesse, but it would straight haue died, the saied Mother Staunton sittyng by, and hauyng touched the child before it grew sicke: but within one bower after the Vicar came home the childe recouered perfectly, and plaied as before.

Item, also she came on a tyme to the house of one Robart Lathburie, of the same Toune, who dislikyng her dealyng, sent her home emptie, but presently after her departure, his Hogges fell sicke and died, to the number of twentie, and in the ende he burned one, whereby as he thinketh, he saued the reste: He also had a Cowe straungely caste into a narrowe

gripe, and beyng holpen out in the preſence of maiſter Henry Moydaunt, notwithſtandyng the diligent care that was taken of her, ſhe was in fewe daies three tymes like to be loſte in the mire. And thus muche for Mother Staunton.

*¶ The effecte of the Euidence geuen in againſt Mother Nokes late of Lamberd Pariſhe in Eſſex.*

A Certaine Seruant to Thomas Spycer of Lamberd Ende in Eſſex yoman, ſporting, and paſſing away the time in play with a great number of youth, chaunced to ſnatche a paire of Gloues out of the pocket of this Mother Nokes Daughter being a yong woman of the age of xviij yeres, which he proteſteth to haue done in ieſt. Her Mother perceiuyng it, demaunded the Gloues of him, but he geuing no greate care to her wordes departed towardes the feelds to fetch home certeine Cattell. Immediately vpon his departure quoth the ſame Mother Nokes to her Daughter, lette him alone, I will bounce him well enough, at what time he being ſoudainely taken, and reft of his limmes fell doune. There

was

was a boye then in his compaine by whome he sent the Glowes to Mother Nokes. Notwithstanding his Maister was faine to cause him to be set home in a Wheele Barrowe, and to bee laide into a bedde, where with his legges a crosse he lay bedded eight daies, and as yet hath not attayned to the right vse of his lymmes.

Further it was auouched that mother Nokes had saied that her housbande laie with one Tailers wife of Lambert Ende, and with reprochfull words reuiled her saiyng at last; thou hast a Nurse childe but thou shalte not keepe it long, and presently thereupon the Childe died.

An other affirmed, that when he had reproued the said Tailers wife, and Mother Nokes as thei were at Churche, and willed them to agree better, the same Mother Nokes in a fume answereth that she cared for none of them all, as longe as Tom helde on her side, meanyng her Feende.

The same man hauing a seruaunt of his at Plough, this Mother Nokes going by, asked the fellowe a question but getting no answere

ak him she went her way. Forthwith one of his hoyses fell doune. At his coming home to dynner, he tolde his Maister howe the same hoyse was swolne about the head. His Maister at first suppolyng that it came by a strype, was greately offended at the ploughman, but afterwardes vnderstandyng of Mother Nokes goyng by, and the circumstance afoyre mentioned, went to thesaid Mother Nokes and chid and thyeatened to haue her to her answere, howbeeit the Hoyse died.

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